



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
09/379,104	08/23/99	NAKAYAMA	Y 500.35669CX1

020457 TM02/0314
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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, N
ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2164
DATE MAILED:

03/14/01

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No.
09/379,104

Applicant(s)
Nakayama et al.

Examiner
Nga B. Nguyen

Group Art Unit
2164



☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Dec 20, 2000

☐ This action is **FINAL**.

☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, **prosecution as to the merits is closed** in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1035 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire three month(s), or thirty days, whichever is longer, from the mailing date of this communication. Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. (35 U.S.C. § 133). Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Disposition of Claim

☒ Claim(s) 6 and 8-14 is/are pending in the application

Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration

☒ Claim(s) 12-14 is/are allowed.

☒ Claim(s) 6, 8, and 9 is/are rejected.

☒ Claim(s) 10 and 11 is/are objected to.

☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

Application Papers

☐ See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.

☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.

☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

☐ All ☐ Some* ☒ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been

☐ received.

☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) _____

☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

☒ Notice of References Cited, PTO-892

☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s) _____

☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413

☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

— SEE OFFICE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES —

Art Unit: 2164

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is the answer to the Amendment filed on December 20, 2000 , which paper has been placed of record in the file.
2. Claim 7 is canceled. Claims 6 and 8-14 are pending in this application.

Allowable Subject Matter/Reasons for Allowance

3. The independent claims 12, 13 and 14 are allowable over the prior arts of cited record because none of the reference taken individually or in combination discloses/teaches the obviousness of the following limitations as described below:

The closest prior art, Hotaling (5,124,912) discloses a meeting management device of a computer system determines the optimal meeting date and time for a specified group of invitee within a set of specified time parameters, the device compares available dates and times of each critical invitee with each other and the comparison determines common available dates and times in which to schedule the meeting. Therefore, it is clear from the description of Hotaling's invention that the prior art does not considered the possibility of dividing a subject of schedule into a plurality of groups, comparing one group in plurality of groups obtained by division with first conference-holding condition to make a coincident result be a second conference-holding condition as included in claims 12 and 14, a retrieving means for dividing each of schedules registered for a plurality of people into a plurality of groups and retrieving common idle time

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among plurality of groups while taking significance degrees of respective groups into account as included in claim 13.

4. Claims 10 and 11 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim 6, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

6. Claims 6, 8, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hotaling et al, U.S. Patent No. 5,124,912.

Regarding to claim 6, Hotaling discloses a scheduling management system, comprising:
a schedule server which stores schedules of participants and schedules of equipments reserved by ones of participants in different groups (figure 1, item 19); and
a plurality of remote client devices operatively connected to schedule server, which allow client users to input schedules of participants and request an idle time retrieval from schedule server (figure 1, item 13).

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Regarding to claim 8, Hotaling further discloses schedule server comprises a communication controller which provides registration for a special group, and wherein idle time is retrieved so that at least one of participants and equipments in special group satisfies a retrieval condition for retrieving idle time (see abstract).

Regarding to claim 9, Hotaling further discloses schedule server comprises a data access unit which accessed selected databases in accordance with instruction for retrieving the idle time common from plurality of groups (column 8, lines 6-13).

Conclusion

7. Claims 6, 8, and 9 are rejected. Claim 10-11 are objected. Claim 12-14 are allowed.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to examiner Nga B. Nguyen, whose telephone number is (703)306-2901. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 7:30 AM-5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vincent A. Millin, can be reached on (703)308-1065.

9. **Any response to this action should be mail to:**

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

c/o Technology Center 2700

Washington, D.C. 20231

or faxed to:

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(703) 308-9051, (for formal communications intended for entry)

or:

(703) 308-5397 (for informal or draft communications, please label

"PROPOSED" or "DRAFT")

Hand-delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park II,


2121 Crystal Drive, Arlington.

VA., Sixth Floor (Receptionist).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703)305-3900.

Nga B. Nguyen
March 8, 2001

VINCENT MILLIN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100


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